

**STRATEGY  
RESEARCH  
PROJECT**

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**PLANNING THE UTILIZATION  
OF FEDERAL RESOURCES  
TO RESPOND  
TO DOMESTIC DISASTERS**

BY

**MR. CLARENCE E. WHITE, JR.  
Federal Emergency Management Agency**

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Clarence E. White, Jr.  
Federal Emergency Management Agency

Col. William W. Allen  
Project Advisor

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U.S. Army War College  
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013

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## **Abstract**

Author: Clarence E. White, Jr.

Title: Planning the Utilization of Federal Resources to Respond to Domestic Disasters

Format: Strategy Research Paper

Date: 15 April 1996 Pages: 36 Classification: Unclassified

This paper provides an overview of the strategic planning that has taken place in preparation for a Federal response to a disaster. The primary document governing the Federal response to disasters is the Federal Response Plan. Since its release in April 1992 and subsequent distribution, the Plan has served as the umbrella document for Federal planning and response to disasters, regardless of magnitude.

Coupled with a review of the planning is the need to review various documents which evaluated the Plan or related to actual responses to determine if planning has been adequate and provided an effective and efficient response. Based on the aforementioned review, recommendations addressing potential or real deficiencies in the Plan will be presented.

## Introduction

The genesis for this Strategy Research Project is based on statements made by United States Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) before the Appropriations Subcommittee for VA (Veterans Administration), HUD (Housing and Urban Development), and Independent Agencies on March 6, 1991. The specific event was a hearing before that Subcommittee on the FY 1992 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) budget.<sup>1</sup>

During the hearing, Senator Mikulski, chairing the Subcommittee at that time, took the FEMA leadership to task for its inadequate and poorly planned and coordinated response to Hurricane Hugo and the Loma Prieta Earthquake. Her negative comments regarding Hurricane Hugo were supplemented by remarks from Senator Ernest Hollings (D-SC), who voiced his displeasure with FEMA's response in the Charleston, South Carolina, area.<sup>2</sup>

The <sup>58</sup> geste of the comments suggested that FEMA should make better utilization of the military during the initial Federal response to future disasters. The concerns related to lack of portable generators to supply lighting and power refrigerators; debris removal; restoration of telephones and electricity; and identifying the location to obtain assistance for displaced families.

The concern with FEMA's response to disasters did not go away. As a result of a report from this same Subcommittee on FEMA's FY 1993 budget, \$400,000 was provided to enter into a contract "with the National Academy of Public Administration for a comprehensive and objective study of the Federal, state, and

local governments' capacities to respond promptly and effectively to major natural disasters occurring in the United States."<sup>3</sup> The study was initiated in the fall of 1992 and completed in February 1993. Some of the recommendations from that report will be addressed later in this paper.

This paper also involves a review of documents related to planning for a Federal response to disasters in the continental United States which has taken place following the aforementioned March 1991 Congressional hearing as well as more recent adjustments and planning to involve the military in supporting that response. The review is done at the macro level and does not include individual agency planning efforts. There will be, however, some review of planning from the Department of Defense (DOD) perspective.

#### Background

The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, Public Law 93-288, as amended, enacted on November 23, 1988, provides legislative authority for various agencies of the Federal government to provide assistance to state and local governments during disasters. The Act assigns responsibility for coordinating this response to the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). In order to provide a focal point for any Federal response, the President appoints a Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) as his representative to coordinate the overall delivery of Federal assistance. The authority for such appointment has been

delegated by the President to the FEMA Director under Executive Order 12148. Federal departments and agencies provide response assistance to a state, under the overall direction of the FCO.<sup>4</sup>

The instructor guide for the DOD Emergency Preparedness Course, which is conducted jointly by DOD and FEMA, indicates that Hurricane Hugo, which occurred in September 1989, and the Loma Prieta Earthquake, which occurred the following month, were two events which resulted in changes in the way the Federal government plans for and responds to disasters. Prior to that time, there was a Plan for Federal Response to a Catastrophic Earthquake; however, there was no indication of any plan for responding to other types of disasters. As a result of the two aforementioned events, a Federal Natural Disaster Response Plan was developed in 1990. This was followed in April 1992 by the issuance of the Federal Response Plan (FRP), which is the current document addressing Federal response to disasters.<sup>5</sup>

The FRP has been updated on four occasions since the initial issuance. However, it still contains the original five basic purposes. These are to:

1. Establish fundamental assumptions and policies;
2. Establish a concept of operations that provides an interagency coordination mechanism to facilitate the immediate delivery of Federal response assistance;
3. Incorporate the coordination mechanisms and structures of other appropriate Federal plans and responsibilities into the overall response;

4. Assign specific functional responsibilities to appropriate Federal departments and agencies; and
5. Identify actions that participating Federal departments and agencies will take in the overall Federal response, in coordination with the affected state.<sup>6</sup>

The FRP, which has an impact on various Federal agencies and their role in disaster response, is an initiative of FEMA and has been developed through the cooperative efforts of 28 departments and agencies (the Small Business Administration was added as a signatory through Change 3 to the FRP, issued on February 3, 1995). The participating departments and agencies include the Departments of Agriculture (USDA), Commerce (DOC), Defense (DOD), Education (DOEd), Energy (DOE), Health and Human Services (DHHS), Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Interior (DOI), Justice (DOJ), Labor (DOL), State (DOS), Transportation (DOT), Treasury (DOTr), and Veterans Affairs (DVA); the Agency for International Development (AID); American Red Cross (ARC); Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); Federal Communications Commission (FCC); Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); General Services Administration (GSA); Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC); National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA); National Communications System (NCS); Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC); Office of Personnel Management (OPM); Small Business Administration (SBA); Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA); and the U.S. Postal Service (USPS). As a participant to the Letter of Agreement, which is part of the FRP, each department and agency

agrees to support the overall concept of operations of the FRP and to carry out their assigned functional responsibilities. They also agree to implement other national and regional planning efforts and exercise activities in order to maintain the overall Federal response capability. The FRP also addresses the command structure and the responsibilities of the various participating agencies.<sup>7</sup> It should be pointed out that the FRP has no regulatory standing. Participation is by agreement and consensus and is not mandated.

The FRP document consists of the Basic Plan, Appendices, Functional Annexes, and Support Annexes. It is within the twelve Functional Annexes or Emergency Support Functions (ESF) that each department or agency has specified responsibilities, either as the primary agency or a support agency. Each ESF includes the policies for that ESF; a situation section with disaster conditions and planning assumptions; the concept of operations in general and organizational terms as well as notifications; initial and continuing response actions; the responsibilities of the primary agency and supporting agencies; and the resource requirements.<sup>8</sup>

Appendix A contains a summary of each ESF along with the primary and support agencies. You will note that DOD is the primary agency on one ESF and a supporting agency on the remaining eleven. The only other agency with a role in all twelve ESFs is the USDA.

In order to get a better understanding of the overall Federal response to a disaster and the associated planning, it may be appropriate to summarize the various steps which take place during the initial phase of a Federal response.

1. The state and local governments make a determination that the response to the disaster is beyond their capabilities. A request for Federal assistance is initiated by the respective governor and forwarded to FEMA for review.
2. FEMA reviews the request, makes a determination on the geographic areas to be considered for Federal assistance and forwards its recommendation to the President. Based on the FEMA recommendation, the President may issue a disaster declaration.
3. Once the declaration is issued, the provisions of the Stafford Act are invoked and Federal support and assistance are provided to the affected state and local governments.
4. An FCO is designated to serve as the point of contact between state and local governments and Federal agencies.
5. An advanced element of the Emergency Response Team (ERT-A) is deployed from the nearest FEMA regional office to meet with the State Coordinating Officer (SCO) to assess the damage and identify the types and amounts of assistance needed. The ERT-A, which establishes an immediate Federal presence at the disaster site, includes regional representatives of the various agencies which may be called upon to provide support and assistance through the ESFs. A

Field Assessment Team (FAst) is also deployed within six hours of notification and arrives on-scene with twelve hours to collect and provide information to determine requirements for critical resources needed to support emergency response activities. The FAst is a component of the ERT-A. Their mission is completed within 24 to 72 hours after arrival.

The FCO is advised of the ERT-As findings.

6. The ERT-A initiates action to establish a Disaster Field Office (DFO).
7. Information from the FCO is relayed to the Emergency Information Coordination Center (EICC) at FEMA Headquarters, where representatives of the various Federal agencies at the headquarters level take the assistance requests and initiate action through their respective agencies. The SCO validates all requests for assistance.<sup>9</sup>

The FRP also provides standing mission assignments to the designated departments and agencies with primary and support responsibilities to carry out ESF activities. Upon activation of an ESF, a primary agency is authorized, in coordination with the FCO and the state, to initiate and continue actions to carry out the ESF mission described in the particular ESF Annex to the Plan, including tasking of designated support agencies.<sup>10</sup> This gives a summary of the overall Federal planning for disasters.

The overall sequence for a Federal response is outlined above. It is now appropriate to give a brief overview of the military portion of that response. While the U.S. military's

primary mission is generally thought of as protecting the United States and its interests from aggression, it is also involved in other activities, including support for Federal response to domestic natural and man-made disasters. This matter is addressed in DOD Directive 3025.1, Military Support to Civil Authorities (MSCA). The MSCA mission is to:

- a. Foster mutual assistance and support for domestic emergencies;
- b. Plan, prepare, and apply resources for domestic emergencies;
- c. Support civil authorities response to emergencies;
- d. Assist other Federal departments and agencies;
- e. Coordinate support from civil authorities to DOD;
- f. Assist military mobilization; and
- g. Provide continuity of operations.<sup>11</sup>

This role is normally fulfilled by the National Guard when the disaster is on a smaller scale and controlled by a state. However, when the disaster grows in proportion and Federal assistance is requested by a governor and approved by the President, the active duty component of the military may be called in as part of the Federal response to provide support and assistance to the state.

The following is a brief summary of the DOD planning structure as outlined in DOD Directive 3025.1, which establishes DOD policy for MSCA. More detailed information can be found in Appendix B.

1. The Secretary of Defense has designated the Secretary of the Army as the DOD Executive Agent for providing DOD domestic disaster support operations.
2. The Secretary of Defense has designated the Commander-in-Chief, Forces Command (CINCFOR); the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Atlantic Command (USCINCLANT); and the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Command (USCINCPAC) as the DOD Planning Agent for MSCA.
3. The Director of Military Support (DOMS), a general officer appointed by the Secretary of the Army, is the DOD action officer and primary contact for all Federal departments and agencies during periods of domestic disaster response.
4. USCINCLANT has delegated the Lead Operational Authority (LOA) for planning; coordinating; and, when directed, executing for MSCA to CINCFOR.
5. CINCFOR serves as the DOD principal planning and operating agent for military support to civil authorities for all DOD components in the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia. CINCFOR also nominates the Defense Coordinating Officer (DCO) for appointment by USCINCLANT.
6. The DCO function serves in the field as the point of contact to the FCO and the ESFs regarding requests for military assistance.
9. The DCO collocates with the FCO and coordinates all FEMA mission assignments for military support.<sup>12</sup>

### Analysis

It is now appropriate to review how well the planning described above has worked. Several items were reviewed to determine the effectiveness of the aforementioned planning effort in actual situations. The FRP, although dated April 1992, was not widely disseminated until August 1992, the same month that Hurricane Andrew struck. Prior to the issuance of the FRP, the Federal response to disasters focused more on recovery following the disaster rather than being part of the initial response.

The first document reviewed was the After Action Report for Joint Task Force Andrew (JTFA) issued on 15 October 1992 by LTG Samuel E. Ebbesen, JTFA Commander. The report stated, among other things, that many participants in the relief effort lacked familiarity with other agencies' equipment, operational procedures, and capabilities in providing relief support. This was attributed, in part, to inadequate knowledge of the FRP. As an example, DOD, because of the tremendous requirement, was tasked by FEMA to provide emergency shelter for disaster victims even though the FRP assigns that as a primary function of the American Red Cross.<sup>13</sup>

The second document reviewed was a report entitled "Coping with Catastrophe: Building an Emergency Management System to Meet People's Needs in Natural and Manmade Disasters," produced by the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) in February 1993. This report contained the following planning items regarding the FRP:

1. While the American Red Cross is a venerable institution, it is not a Federal agency. This could present a problem in fulfilling its role as the primary agency in the Mass Care Annex, ESF-6, and tasking other Federal agencies and private organizations such as the Salvation Army.
2. There may be some confusion between ESF-6, Mass Care, and ESF-11, Food, since feeding is part of mass care.
3. The issue of security was prominent whenever the FRP was brought up in field interviews. Because state and local law enforcement agencies may themselves be victims, security may warrant being an additional ESF.
4. It is not clear when and under what circumstances the FRP will be invoked which created confusion among participating agencies and could lead to crucial delays.<sup>14</sup>

In a report entitled "The Army's Role in Domestic Disaster Support: An Assessment of Policy Choices," developed at the Arroyo Center by RAND, the summary states:

"The military has often been summoned to support natural-disaster relief operations. Although recently the military role in civil emergencies has been somewhat broadened by policy changes, relief efforts have never been considered a primary mission for the military and have seldom conflicted with principal military missions. Recent events, however, suggest that it may be useful to rethink the military role in civil emergencies. First, the end of the Cold War has triggered discussion about the opportunity for new roles and

missions for the military. Second, the sequence of natural disasters in 1992--notably, the hurricane devastation in Florida and Hawaii--revealed that the public clearly expects the military, especially the Army, to involve itself in disaster response. Furthermore, the military participation in fact generally validated these expectations."<sup>15</sup>

In order to get an impartial evaluation of the FRP, a performance audit produced by FEMA's Office of Inspector General was also reviewed. The audit, which was conducted in the fall of 1992 and followed by a comprehensive report in January 1993, reviewed FEMA's performance after Hurricane Andrew. The scope of the audit was based on the assumption that FEMA needed to learn from Hurricane Andrew to promptly improve the FRP, and to improve the performance and coordination of all agencies in the next extraordinary or catastrophic disaster.

The following critical items related to planning were identified in the audit:

1. FEMA officials followed a "wait and see" practice which delayed the initiation of response activities.
2. FEMA officials believe they lacked authority to initiate direct Federal assistance and waited for specific requests for aid from state officials.
3. The level of cost sharing and the burden placed on the state delayed the Federal response.
4. There was a delay in response by other agencies who were awaiting specific assignments from the FCO.

5. Confusion and duplication resulted from fragmented responsibility for providing mass care to disaster victims.
6. The administrative systems which supported response and recovery efforts were unsatisfactory.<sup>16</sup>

There were two other items identified in the audit report which would assist in improving the Federal response to disasters.

1. Local and state law enforcement officials needed help in traffic control and ensuring the security of people and property. Because the FRP does not adequately address the coordination of Federal assistance for law enforcement, Federal assets were not mobilized and deployed in a timely and coordinated fashion.
2. FEMA had not fully coordinated the FRP with state and local emergency operating plans, and had not adequately exercised the Plan with state and local officials.<sup>17</sup>

In addition to the audit report, the FEMA Office of the Inspector General also conducted a review of a portion of the FRP. The report of the review was completed in June 1994 and provided an update on a portion of the FRP. According to the report of the review, the overall theme that emerged during the interview and review of documentation was that FEMA was the central player in the multi-agency Federal disaster response and, as such, should take a proactive, leadership role in the development and maintenance of that important government function. Creating a unified response capability with

representatives of many different Federal agencies is a complex task. It is further complicated by the fact that for most agencies, disaster response is not their primary mission. Each agency has its own priorities, requirements, policies, and methods of operating that are known and familiar to that agency as well as its own chain of command and communications to satisfy.<sup>18</sup>

The most significant major finding identified in the report of the review was the critical need for a more uniform, structured, better defined command and control system for the multi-agency Federal disaster response in general. Roles and responsibilities of all FEMA response and recovery elements as well as those of the other Federal agencies need further definition and refinement beyond that found in the FRP.<sup>19</sup>

In early March 1993, the Catastrophic Disaster Response Group established a Federal Response Planning Task Force to make the changes necessary to achieve operational readiness for Federal response during the 1993 hurricane season. Among the needs identified related to the planning effort were the following needs:

1. A common operating framework for all disaster responses;
2. Notification and activation procedures for the FRP;
3. A formal Federal response planning process; and
4. Federal response training requirements.<sup>20</sup>

While the aforementioned documents reflect items addressed in reviews of the Federal response within the last three years,

two additional documents were reviewed to determine if some of the items addressed previously had been corrected. The first was the Report of the FEMA EM 3115, DR-1048 Review of the Bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Building in Oklahoma City. Two items of significance were identified in this report. They were:

1. FEMA and other Federal agencies should develop plans and protocol, including that for information management, for response to terrorist events.
2. Federal, state, and local emergency plans should reflect or relate to the FRP. Contingency plans at the state and local levels may be developed and should be practiced before needed.<sup>21</sup>

The issue of command and control also surfaced during the Federal response to the bombing. While the bombing was unusual when one considers that the normal disasters involve flooding, earthquakes, and hurricanes, the FRP must be adaptable to this type of disaster also. It may be worthy of note that the Oklahoma City incident was unique in another way because it not only involved the disaster associated with the bombing but it involved a crime scene. These two items caused some jurisdictional problems not normally encountered.<sup>22</sup>

The second document was the draft Exercise Evaluation Report for RESPONSE 95. As part of a program of regularly evaluating the FRP, FEMA conducted RESPONSE 95, which was intended to assess the response plans, policies, procedures, and interfaces between various levels of government which would respond to a

catastrophic event. The participating organizations included the state and local emergency management agencies of Louisiana and Mississippi, the FEMA regional staffs in Atlanta, Georgia, and Denton, Texas, the national and regional staffs of the ESF agencies, and the FEMA headquarters staff, along with numerous volunteer agencies. The one general concern related to planning that emerged from this evaluation report was that the various agencies continue to experience some difficulty in working together because of different operating procedures and organizational structure.<sup>23</sup>

#### Recommendations

As stated previously, a study was conducted by NAPA regarding the Federal response to major disasters. The most significant recommendation related to planning was to make the FRP the President's Response Plan. According to NAPA, this would give it more validity and strength.<sup>24</sup> One of the problems related to the Federal response to a disaster is the status of FEMA in relation to other agencies involved in the response, specifically cabinet-level agencies. FEMA is a relatively new independent agency having been created in 1979. It also has a small workforce and budget in relation to many of the other agencies involved. A closer tie to the White House and making the FRP the President's Plan would strengthen FEMA's position of command and control.

Regarding the RAND report, the following recommendations were contained within:

1. The Army should support formal acceptance of civil disaster response as a mission for both active and reserve forces. Commanders cannot be expected to devote time to civil emergency preparedness if combat readiness is their exclusive focus.
2. Executive authority for military support should be transferred from the Secretary of the Army to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. This will allow the military to function according to normal chains of command during civil emergencies.<sup>25</sup>

Both of these recommendations will assist in enhancing the military response to disasters and allow disaster response to be treated like any other mission. During the review of materials, the impression was given that the military, since they are self-contained in many respects, may not always be a team player and prefer to work more independently. The upper level chain of command for military response to disasters is unique because it places the military in the role of a supporting organization to a civilian agency. The military must be part of the team and function as such.

The FEMA audit report indicated that the FRP was a fundamentally sound framework for organizing Federal response. However, the planning needed to convert the functional groups of Federal agencies into a cohesive, working response team has not been done. In addition, delays were caused by FEMA officials' belief that they lacked authority to mobilize resources and

provide Federal assistance until specifically requested. The following issues also need attention:

- a. Mobilizing and prepositioning resources;
- b. Establishing early presence at disaster site;
- c. Using prearranged taskings;
- d. Assessing damage;
- e. Using FEMA mobile assets;
- f. Providing communications support;
- g. Providing logistical support; and
- h. Providing for chain of command.<sup>26</sup>

The last item deserves particular attention since it may be the root cause of other problems associated with the Federal response. In addition to the FEMA lead response, a Presidential Task Force and a DOD Joint Task Force to the FEMA FCO created three separate lines of authority during the response to Hurricane Andrew. FEMA must take a more pro-active role in clarifying the command structure, the authorities and responsibilities of each element in the structure, and the relationship of Federal agencies with state and local authorities.

The FEMA report of the review of the Advance Element of the ERT recommended that the Director of FEMA should appoint a person or office to serve as the systems manager, responsible for developing and implementing systems that meet agency-wide disaster response requirements. However, it should be pointed out that the inspection report was completed after the most

recent FEMA organization in November 1993. In this reorganization, the Director created a Response and Recovery Directorate to provide focus on FEMA's disaster efforts.<sup>27</sup>

My research has indicated that responsibility for the FRP may not have been centralized within FEMA. This matter appears to have been corrected with the creation of the Response and Recovery Directorate and the consolidation of all the disaster response activity in one organization. There has also been a change in the direction of FEMA with more emphasis being placed on disaster response. Previously, the disaster program shared priority with the civil defense program.

Based on the research conducted, the following additional recommendations are presented to supplement those identified above:

1. ESF 5, Information and Planning Annex, and ESF 7, Resource Support Annex, should not be separate annexes but should be incorporated into the remaining ESFs. These are requirements that are associated with any ESF and should not be looked upon as separate and independent activities. If these functions are to continue as separately identifiable items, they should be identified in the FRP as support annexes similar to financial management.
2. ESF 6, Mass Care, and ESF 11, Food, should be combined since there is a good bit of overlap with them in the field already. It is very difficult to separate the two functions and it may also result in an unnecessary duplication to

carry out both functions. The two functions go hand-in-hand and are required on some scale at most disasters.

3. The primary agency for the new ESF 6, i.e., combined ESF 6 and ESF 11, should be the Department of Defense because it has more of the resources and capabilities to handle this new ESF. The American Red Cross could continue to be a supporting agency for the ESF, however, the capabilities of other volunteer organizations such as the Salvation Army should also be considered. The military has the resources to execute this function and has the experience with mass care and feeding of large military forces.
4. The role of the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS) in ESF 8 should be reviewed in relation to the quickness in being activated and any negative impact the activation may have on capabilities at the local level. The prime concern here is that the staffing for the NDMS is largely composed of volunteers who will take time to mobilize. The mobilization may pull resources which are needed in other areas such as local health care.
5. ESF 9 should be updated to reflect the change in primary agency from DOD to FEMA and to incorporate any other changes resulting from the change in the primary agency.
6. An additional ESF should be developed to provide traffic control, security, and safeguarding of personal and real property in the disaster area. The proposed ESF should supplement state and local law enforcement authorities.

Care must be taken; however, to avoid any conflict with state and local laws which should continue to be enforced by state and local law enforcement authorities. The current provisions for law enforcement in the FRP appear awkward and disconnected from the overall process of activation. The primary agency for this proposed ESF should be DOD.

7. FEMA should continue to exercise and refine the FRP and its subunits so that participants at all levels become increasingly familiar with the procedures and capabilities of the various Federal, state, and local agencies involved in a response. This continues to surface as a problem to some degree at any disaster, due in part to having different individuals involved.
8. FEMA should continue to pursue a common operating framework and procedures for all disasters and among all participants. Perhaps a review needs to be made of the regional, state, and local operational plans and procedures to tighten up problem areas. A positive effort should continue to be made to insure the all participating agencies are operating under common plans and procedures.
9. FEMA should continue to refine the process of notifying agencies when the FRP has been invoked. Coupled with this is the need to continue issuing assignments in advance of disasters, pre-positioning resources, having necessary arrangements such as cost-sharing worked out in advance, and having disaster declarations in place when there is reliable

information that one is eminent. FEMA must continue to be pro-active rather than reactive.

10. FEMA should continue to offer training to other Federal, state, and local agencies so that the response at all levels can continue to be more efficient and effective. FEMA currently conducts the Emergency Preparedness Course in conjunction with FORSCOM to better acquaint the armed forces with their role in disaster planning and response. Training is also provided to other Federal, state, and local agencies through FEMA's Emergency Management Institute to better acquaint them with the FRP and the various roles and responsibilities associated with it. This information sharing will greatly enhance future joint planning and response efforts.
11. FEMA must continue to establish the leadership role for the Federal government in responding to disasters. Proper command and control are essential to the efficient and effective utilization of resources and reducing impact on the public. Consideration may need to be given to FEMA reducing its role in the ESFs to permit greater concentration on the command and control aspect of disaster response.

There are a few other adjustments which have been made related to Federal disaster planning and response which are not included in any of the documentation reviewed but are worthy of note.

1. The FEMA Director at the time of Hurricane Andrew left the administration with the change in the White House. Prior FEMA Directors had little or no state and local disaster experience. The current Director was the former Emergency Management Director in the State of Arkansas. He brings a limited perspective based on his prior experiences. Future political appointees must have some background at the state and/or local level in disaster planning and response because of the political interest in this area. The position of Director of FEMA cannot be filled by someone just as a reward for political support. It must have the right person to carry out the responsibilities associated with the position.
2. The senior Federal employee responsible for disaster planning, response, and recovery in FEMA is no longer a political appointee but a career civil servant.

#### Conclusion

In conclusion, there appears to be adequate planning at the Federal level to have an efficient and effective response from all agencies including the military. There is a continuing program of after action reports completed after each disaster and a regular program of exercising disaster plans at all levels and evaluating the results of those exercises. Both of these provide constant feedback which can be used to strengthen planning documents and improve the overall response. Only time will tell if that planning effort is valid.

A good pulse to assess the effectiveness of disaster response is that of the media. Since the days of Hurricane Andrew, media reports have switched from criticizing FEMA as the dumping ground for political hacks and an incompetent organization to one acknowledging it as an agency which has surfaced as a shining star in the Federal bureaucracy.<sup>28</sup> Feedback from people assisted by FEMA and the other agencies involved in disaster response, generally include high praise for the responsiveness and service provided.<sup>29</sup>

Recent reports indicate that FEMA has made a tremendous turnaround in their efforts to plan for, respond to, and recover from disasters. On February 26, 1996, President Clinton announced that he had elevated the Director of FEMA to Cabinet status. This honor was announced by the President via a telephone hook-up to the Mid-Year meeting of the National Emergency Management Association where the FEMA Director was making a report on FEMA to state and local emergency management directors from around the country. This means that having the FEMA Director as a member of the Cabinet sends an unmistakable message to state and local officials and the American people on the high priority the Administration places on helping individuals and communities during disasters. The FEMA Director's presence at Cabinet meetings provides additional opportunities to talk one-on-one with Cabinet secretaries. This will support FEMA's efforts to work with other Federal agencies on streamlining programs for state and local implementation such

as hazardous materials, and enhance FEMA's coordination role in the Federal Response Plan.<sup>30</sup>

Problems will continue to occur because of the emergency nature of disaster response; however, the overall result has been positive in terms of victim satisfaction and praise from political leaders at all levels. This was especially true when eleven of the twelve FEMA urban search and rescue teams were activated to assist the Oklahoma City Fire Department in their response and victim recovery efforts following the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building.<sup>31</sup>

FEMA must take advantage of the lessons learned from exercises and real disasters and continue to work with other agencies at the Federal, state, and local level to improve the overall response. While problems can and do occur, they can be minimized through the cooperative efforts of all participants.

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## APPENDIX A

The following is a summary of each ESF along with the primary and support agencies:

ESF 1, "Transportation," provides for the coordination of Federal transportation support to State and local governmental entities, voluntary organizations, and Federal agencies requiring transportation capacity to perform disaster assistance missions following a catastrophic earthquake, significant natural disaster, or other event requiring Federal response. The lead agency is DOT and the support agencies are USDA, DOD, DOE, DOS, GSA, ICC, TVA, and USPS.

ESF 2, "Communications," assures the provision of Federal telecommunications support to Federal, State, and local response efforts following a Presidentially-declared emergency, major disaster, extraordinary situation and other emergencies. The lead agency is NCS and the support agencies are USDA, DOC, DOD, DOI, DOT, FCC, FEMA, and GSA.

ESF 3, "Public Works and Engineering," includes technical advice and evaluations, engineering services, construction management and inspection, emergency contracting, emergency repair of wastewater and solid waste facilities, and real estate support for the stated purposes. The lead agency is the DOD, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the support agencies are USDA, DOC, DOE, DHHS, DOI, DOL, DOT, DVA, EPA, GSA, and TVA.

ESF 4, "Firefighting," provides for detecting and suppressing wildland, rural, and urban fires resulting from, or occurring coincidentally with, a catastrophic earthquake, significant natural disaster or other event requiring Federal response assistance. The lead agency is the USDA, Forest Service, and the support agencies are DOC, DOD, DOI, EPA, and FEMA.

ESF 5, "Information and Planning," provides for the collection, processing, and dissemination of information about a potential or actual disaster or emergency to facilitate the overall activities of the Federal government in providing response assistance to an affected State. The lead agency is FEMA and the support agencies are USDA, DOC, DOD, DOEd, DOE, DHHS, DOI, DOJ, DOT, DOTr, ARC, EPA, GSA, NASA, NCS, NRC, and SBA.

ESF 6, "Mass Care," includes coordinating efforts to provide sheltering, feeding, and emergency first aid following a catastrophic earthquake, significant natural disaster or other event requiring Federal response assistance; to operate a Disaster Welfare Information System to collect, receive, and report information about the status of victims and assist with family reunification within the disaster area; and to coordinate bulk distribution of emergency relief supplies to disaster victims following a disaster. The lead agency is the ARC and the support agencies are USDA, DOC, DOD, DHHS, DHUD, DOT, DVA, FEMA, GSA, and USPS.

ESF 7, "Resource Support," provides logistical/resource support following a catastrophic earthquake, other significant natural disaster or other event requiring Federal response. The lead agency is GSA and the support agencies are USDA, DOC, DOD, DOE, DHHS, DOL, DOT, DVA, FEMA, NCS, and OPM.

ESF 8, "Health and Medical Services," provides coordination assistance to supplement State and local resources to respond to public health and medical care needs following a significant natural disaster or man-made event. The lead agency is the DHHS, United States Public Health Service, and the support agencies are USDA, DOD, DOJ, DOT, DVA, AID, ARC, EPA, FEMA, GSA, NCS, and USPS.

ESF 9, "Urban Search and Rescue," describes the use of Federal Urban Search and Rescue assets following an event requiring a Federal response. The lead agency is FEMA and the support agencies are USDA, DOD, DHHS, DOL, DOT, AID, EPA, and GSA. Change 2 to the FRP, issued on February 3, 1995, changed the primary agency for ESF 9 from DoD to FEMA, which has an Urban Search and Rescue program and contact with local fire and rescue departments that provide response capability.

ESF 10, "Hazardous Materials," provides Federal support to State and local governments in response to an actual or potential discharge and/or release of hazardous materials following a catastrophic earthquake or other catastrophic

disaster. The lead agency is EPA and the support agencies are USDA, DOC, DOD, DOE, DHHS, DOT, DOJ, DOL, DOS, DOT, FEMA, GSA, and NRC.

ESF 11, "Food," identifies, secures, and arranges for the transportation of food assistance to affected areas following a major disaster or emergency or other event requiring Federal response. The lead agency is the USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, and the support agencies are DOD, DHHS, DOT, ARC, EPA, and FEMA.

ESF 12, "Energy," facilitates restoration of the Nation's emergency system following a catastrophic earthquake, natural disaster, or other significant event requiring Federal response. The lead agency is DOE and the support agencies are USDA, DOD, DOS, DOT, GSA, NCS, NRC, and TVA. This ESF was updated by Change 4 to the FRP, issued on February 3, 1995.<sup>32</sup>

## APPENDIX B

The following is a summary of the DOD planning structure as outlined in DOD Directive 3025.1:

1. The Secretary of Defense has designated the Secretary of the Army as the DOD Executive Agent for providing DOD domestic disaster support operations. As the DOD Executive Agent, the Secretary develops necessary planning guidance, plans, and procedures. The Secretary has authority to task DOD components to plan for and to commit DOD resources in response to requests for military assistance from civil authorities. The Secretary of the Army's standing mission for domestic disaster relief operations is contained in the January 15, 1993 edition of DOD Directive 3025.1. MSCA is a potential mission of all units of the military.
2. The Secretary of Defense has designated the Commander-in-Chief, Forces Command (CINCFOR); the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Atlantic Command (USCINCLANT); and the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Pacific Command (USCINCPAC) as the DOD Planning Agent for MSCA. CINCFOR has responsibility for the continental United States; USCINCLANT has responsibility for Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands; and USCINCPAC has responsibility for Alaska, Hawaii, and the U.S. possessions and territories in the Pacific area.
3. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is responsible for communicating appropriate guidance issued by the Secretary of the Army to the Commanders of the Unified and Specified

Commands. The Commanders are to provide MSCA response as directed by the DOD Executive Agent.

4. Within the policies contained in DOD Directive 3025.1, its states that, under the Stafford Act, it is the policy of the Federal government to provide an orderly and continuing means of supplemental assistance to state and local governments in their responsibilities to alleviate the suffering and damage that result from major disasters or emergencies. Upon declaring a major disaster or emergency, the President may direct any agency of the Federal government to undertake missions and tasks (on either a reimbursable or non-reimbursable basis) to provide assistance to state and local agencies. The President appoints an FCO to operate in the affected area, and delegates authority to the FCO. The President has delegated to the Director of FEMA the authority to appoint FCO's; and FEMA officials frequently serve as FCOs. This policy simply reiterates the provisions of the Stafford Act and Executive Order 12148 in a DOD document.
5. The Director of Military Support (DOMS), a general officer appointed by the Secretary of the Army, is the DOD action officer and primary contact for all Federal departments and agencies during periods of domestic disaster response. On behalf of DOD, the DOMS and his supporting staff ensures the planning, coordination, and execution of many domestic support operations.

6. USCINCLANT has delegated the Lead Operational Authority (LOA) for planning; coordinating; and, when directed, executing for MSCA to CINCFOR. While the Army may be the lead agency, a joint task force may be established, if needed. USCINCLANT has issued the following Emergency Assistance Policies:

- a. No conflict with DOD mission;
- b. Supplement state and local effort;
- c. Use minimum resource support;
- d. DOD personnel remain under military chain of command;  
and
- e. Representative of state/local authority on-scene for coordination.

7. CINCFOR serves as the DOD principal planning and operating agent for military support to civil authorities for all DOD components in the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia. CINCFOR nominates the Defense Coordinating Officer (DCO) for appointment by USCINCLANT. The DOD plans for responding to domestic emergencies are included under the Domestic Emergency Planning System (DEPS). This 15-volume document is published by U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) for USACOM. Volume V, which is an interim document published on February 8, 1995, contains the Disaster Relief Plan.

8. The DCO function is supported by DOD and serves in the field as the point of contact to the FCO and the ESFs regarding

requests for military assistance. The DCO and staff coordinate support and provide liaison to the ESFs. In the organizational chart for a disaster, the DCO is placed between the ESFs and the FCO. This is due in part to the fact that DOD is involved in all the ESFs.

9. The DCO collocates with the FCO and coordinates all FEMA mission assignments for military support. The DCO usually has operational control for all DOD forces deployed to support the Federal effort.<sup>33</sup>

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> United States Senate, Departments of Veterans Administration and Housing and Urban Development and Independent Agencies Appropriations for Fiscal Year 1992. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1991.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> United States House of Representatives, Conference Report (Report 102-902). Washington: Government Printing Office, 1992.

<sup>4</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency, The Federal Response Plan. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1992.

<sup>5</sup> FORSCOM, Department of Defense Emergency Preparedness Course, Class 96-01. Berryville, VA: FORSCOM, 1995.

<sup>6</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency, The Federal Response Plan. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1992.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

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<sup>11</sup> Department of Defense, DOD Directive 3025.1, Military Support to Civil Authorities (MSCA). Washington: Department of Defense, 1993.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> DCSOPS Second Army, Joint Task Force Andrew (JTFA) After Action Report (AAR). Fort Gillem, GA: DCSOPS, 1992.

<sup>14</sup> National Academy of Public Administration, Coping with Catastrophe: Building an Emergency Management System to Meet People's Needs in Natural and Manmade Disasters. Washington: National Academy of Public Administration, 1993.

<sup>15</sup> Arroyo Center, U.S. Army, The Army's Role in Domestic Disaster Support: An Assessment of Policy Choices. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1993.

<sup>16</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA's Disaster Management Program: A Performance Audit After Hurricane Andrew. Washington: Federal Emergency Management Agency, 1993.

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<sup>18</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency, Review of Command, Control, and Communications for the Advance Element of the Emergency Response Team (ERT-A). Washington: Federal Emergency Management Agency, 1994.

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<sup>20</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency, Report of the Federal Response Planning Task Force. Washington: Federal Emergency Management Agency, 1993.

<sup>21</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency, Report of the FEMA EM 3115, DR-1048 Review of the Bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Building, April 19, 1995. Washington: Federal Emergency Management Agency, 1995.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency, RESPONSE 95, Exercise Evaluation Report. Washington: Federal Emergency Management Agency, 1996.

<sup>24</sup> National Academy of Public Administration, Coping with Catastrophe: Building an Emergency Management System to Meet People's Needs in Natural and Manmade Disasters. Washington: National Academy of Public Administration, 1993.

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<sup>27</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency, Review of Command, Control, and Communications for the Advance Element of the Emergency Response Team (ERT-A). Washington: Federal Emergency Management Agency, 1994.

<sup>28</sup> Lowery, Vern, "Lessons Learned: Midwest Flood of 1993." Engineer, February 1994, 26-28.

<sup>29</sup> Atkin, Leslie, "The Federal Response Plan vs. The Great Flood." Hazard, August/September 1993, 8-10.

<sup>30</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency, Director's Weekly Update. Washington: Federal Emergency Management Agency, 1996.

<sup>31</sup> Collins, Larry, "The Role of FEMA's USAR Incident Support Team." Firehouse, September 1995, 52-70.

<sup>32</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency, The Federal Response Plan. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1992.

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